

(iii) If the proposed action would be located in a floodplain or wetland.

(iv) If the action is mitigated to insignificance in the FONSI, in lieu of an EIS (§ 989.22(c)).

(v) If the proposed action is a change to airspace use or designation.

(f) As a rule, the same organizational level that prepares the EA reviews and recommends the FONSI for approval by the EPC. MAJCOMs may decide the level of EA approval and FONSI signature, except as provided in § 989.14(g).

(g) Air Force staff must get permission to deviate from the procedures outlined in this part from SAF/MIQ in accordance with § 989.30.

§ 989.16 Environmental impact statement.

(a) Certain classes of environmental impacts require preparation of an EIS (40 CFR Part 1502). These include, but are not limited to:

(1) Potential for significant degradation of the environment.

(2) Potential for significant threat or hazard to public health or safety.

(3) Substantial environmental controversy concerning the significance or nature of the environmental impact of a proposed action.

(b) Certain other actions normally, but not always, require an EIS. These include, but are not limited to:

(1) Public land withdrawals of over 5,000 acres (Eagle Act, 43 U.S.C. 155-158).

(2) Establishment of new air-to-ground weapons ranges.

(3) Site selection of new airfields.

(4) Site selection of major installations.

(5) Development of major new weapons systems (at decision points that involve demonstration, validation, production, deployment, and area or site selection for deployment).

(6) Establishing or expanding supersonic training areas over land below 30,000 feet MSL (mean sea level).

(7) Disposal and reuse of closing installations.

§ 989.17 Notice of intent.

The EPF must furnish to HQ USAF/CEV the NOI (40 CFR 1508.22) describing the proposed action for publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER. The EPF,

through the host base public affairs office, will also provide the NOI to newspapers and other media in the area potentially affected by the proposed action. The EPF must provide copies of the notice to the proper state SPOC (E.O. 12372) and must also distribute it to requesting agencies, organizations, and individuals. Along with the draft NOI, the EPF must also forward the completed DOPAA to HQ USAF for review.

§ 989.18 Scoping.

After publication of the NOI for an EIS, the EPF must initiate the public scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7) to determine the scope of issues to be addressed and to help identify significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth. Methods of scoping range from soliciting written comments to conducting public scoping meetings (see 40 CFR 1501.7 and 1506.6(e)). The purpose of this process is to de-emphasize insignificant issues and focus the scope of the environmental analysis on significant issues (40 CFR 1500.4(g)). The result of scoping is that the proponent and EPF determine the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in the EIS (40 CFR 1508.25). The EPF must send meeting plans for scoping meetings to AF/CEV (or ANGRC/CEV) for SAF/MIQ concurrence no later than 30 days before the first scoping meeting. Scoping meeting plans are similar in content to public hearing plans (see attachment 3 of this part).

§ 989.19 Draft EIS.

(a) *Preliminary draft.* The EPF prepares a Preliminary draft EIS (PDEIS) (40 CFR 1502.9) based on the scope of issues decided on during the scoping process. The format of the EIS must be in accordance with the format recommended in the CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1502.10 and 1502.11). The CEQ regulations indicate that EISs are normally fewer than 150 pages (300 pages for proposals of unusual complexity). The EPF provides a sufficient number of copies of the PDEIS to HQ USAF/CEV for HQ USAF EPC review and to AFCEE/EC for technical review.

(b) *Review of draft EIS.* After the HQ USAF EPC review, the EPF makes any

necessary revisions to the PDEIS and forwards it to HQ USAF/CEV as a draft EIS for security and policy review. Once the draft EIS is approved, HQ USAF/CEV notifies the EPF to print sufficient copies of the draft EIS for distribution to congressional delegations and interested agencies. After congressional distribution, the EPF sends the draft EIS to all others on the distribution list. HQ USAF/CEV then files the document with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and provides a copy to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Environmental Security.

(c) *Public review of draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19).* (1) The public comment period for the draft EIS is at least 45 days from the publication date of the notice of availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the FEDERAL REGISTER. EPA publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER, each week, NOAs of EISs filed during the preceding week. This public comment period may be extended an additional 15 days, at the request of the EPF. If the draft EIS is unusually long, the EPF may distribute a summary to the public with an attached list of locations (such as public libraries) where the entire draft EIS may be reviewed. The EPF must distribute the full draft EIS to certain entities, for example agencies with jurisdiction by law or agencies with special expertise in evaluating the environmental impacts, and anyone else requesting the entire draft EIS (40 CFR 1502.19).

(2) The EPF holds public hearings on the draft EIS according to the procedures in 40 CFR 1506.6(c) and (d). Hearings take place no sooner than 15 days after the FEDERAL REGISTER NOA and at least 15 days before the end of the comment period. Scheduling hearings toward the end of the comment period is encouraged to allow the public to obtain and more thoroughly review the draft EIS. The EPF must provide hearing plans to HQ USAF/CEV (or ANGRC/CEV) for SAF/MIQ concurrence no later than 30 days prior to the first public hearing. See attachment 3 of this part for public hearing procedures.

(d) *Response to comments (40 CFR 1503.4).* The EPF must incorporate its responses to comments in the final EIS by either modifying the text and refer-

ring in the appendix to where the appropriate modification is addressed or providing a written explanation in the comments section, or both. The EPF may group comments of a similar nature together to allow a common response and may also respond to individuals separately.

(e) *Seeking additional comments.* The EPF may, at any time during the EIS process, seek additional public comments, such as when there has been a significant change in circumstances, development of significant new information of a relevant nature, or where there is substantial environmental controversy concerning the proposed action. Significant new information leading to public controversy regarding the scope after the scoping process is such a changed circumstance. An additional public comment period may also be necessary after the publication of the draft EIS due to public controversy or changes made as the result of previous public comments. Such periods when additional public comments are sought shall last for at least 30 days.

§ 989.20 Final EIS.

(a) If changes in the draft EIS are minor or limited to factual corrections and responses to comments, the proponent may, with the prior approval of SAF/MIQ, prepare a document containing only draft EIS comments, Air Force responses, and errata sheets of changes staffed to the HQ USAF EPC for coordination. However, the proponent must submit the draft EIS and all of the above documents, with a new cover sheet indicating that it is a final EIS (40 CFR 1503.4(c)), to HQ USAF/CEV for filing with the EPA (40 CFR 1506.9). If more extensive modifications are required, the EPF must prepare a preliminary final EIS incorporating these modifications for coordination within the Air Force. Regardless of which procedure is followed, the final EIS must be processed in the same way as the draft EIS, except that the public need not be invited to comment during the 30-day post-filing waiting period. The final EIS should be furnished to every person, organization, or agency that made substantive comments on